

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

# All THE YEAR ROUND

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## JACK DOYLE'S DAUGHTER.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON.

### PART IV. PHOEBE'S FORTUNE.

#### CHAPTER IX. AN UNSEEN STORY.

HAD it not been for that narrowly-escaped encounter with Stanislas Adrianski—if indeed it were he, and not some less distinguished foreigner of the same illustrious family—it is difficult to know what Phœbe could have done during her career as an artist's model. But to speculate on what people would have done, if something had not happened, is the province of historians and professional biographers. To say that Phœbe found entire content in mending clothes and in sadly ill-regulated theological studies would be absurd; but it would be no less absurd to suppose that she found no comfort in either. This is the hardest period in her adventures to describe. For the first time since she had first met Stanislas, the days went by without bringing events with them, and yet she had never missed events less, or felt herself less completely alone.

I would linger over those hours, days, weeks of solitude, were I not convinced that the dullest taste would recoil from such a seemingly empty chronicle. She was still wandering about in a labyrinth, but the thread in her needle was in some sort playing the part of the clue, and she was following it not altogether blindly. Heathen and savage as she was, she could make out one or two leading points without any outer light, such as that it could be nobody's fault but her own if life looked like a general failure, leading to nothing. Of the more serious matters with which her head was growing full, there is nothing to say. She was simply passing through a phase through which most people pass in

childhood, before they grow out of such childish and unpractical things for good and all. But the nature and purpose of oneself, and therefore, in a less degree, of one's appendage, the universe, is a question of sufficient fascination, while it lasts, to keep dulness away from the asker, though by no means from others. In such a condition of mind, the exact measure of the freedom of the will can fill up the whole of an unoccupied five minutes at any time, and with this advantage, that the topic is no sooner settled than it is quite ready to open itself all over again. As it happened, Phœbe had rather less genius for speculative theology than for anything else, so that there seemed no reason why she should not be amply provided with thought-food for the rest of her days.

So, at any rate for the present, darning stockings and sewing on buttons sufficed for Phœbe as well as grinding lenses had once been sufficient for the working hours of a somewhat deeper philosopher. Of course she did not mean to live like this all her life long; but she was young, and felt no pressing call to begin to act upon thoughts that were turning into theories. Some sort of plunge would have to be made some day, and meanwhile it was pleasant to sit upon the edge of the shore, and to look out over the sea. Had circumstances forbidden every sort of action, she would no doubt have plunged out at once; but for this, as things were, any time would do, and she had learned to be in no hurry for a change. When she looked out farthest, her stitches formed a web something in this wise. She would never marry—that was certain. Nobody would ever want her, and if any man should, he must be told to look elsewhere. Not even Stanislas Adrianski, should he claim her, as the saviour of Poland, at the head of a victorious

army, should be allowed henceforth to bring the romance of a hero and heroine to its rightful ending. That old dream—she knew not why—was as dead as the old bay-tree, which must now, divorced from its only poet, be dead indeed. Not even Phil Nelson—but that had never been part of her story, and was his no more. She must live for others, if they would let her; for strangers, if she could find any in need of such incapable fingers as hers. Then the stitches would follow one another faster, and the new thoughts would begin to show themselves unable to root out, if not the old dreams, yet the old way of dreaming. She had read, even in her old books, of saintly women who had played such subordinate parts as mothers and confidantes of heroes and heroines, and had given them a sort of languid liking, as having no concern with one who was to be nothing less than herself, the heroine of her own story. But these had always been represented as having had their stories, just as she must now come to the conclusion that she had had hers, and it was among the played-out, third-rate characters that she must now look for her types and companions. A nun with a turn for nursing was not any longer an unattractive character, and would have plenty of time for contemplation as well as of opportunity for action. Fancy put in a stitch, and suggested a dim picture of Phil Nelson, say, stretched on a hospital bed, and opening his eyes, after a long swoon, upon the face of a nun in whom he recognised the foster-sister for whom he had once professed to care, and with whom all thoughts of love and hate were alike dead and buried. But that was only an ornamental flourish upon a picture which was otherwise studiously plain and sombre. One real thing Phœbe had once really known a little: that none are so poor as to be unable to say, "I will help those who are still poorer—and I can." Only—how does one become a nun? For want of knowledge the question was even harder to answer than the old one of "How does one become a heroine?"

Perhaps the actress in Phœbe was by no means so dead as the vision of Stanislas triumphant, or as the old bay-tree. But the elevation of her heart was, at any rate, as genuine as the mood of inspiration which had once transformed her from Phœbe Doyle into Olivia Vernon. Had she become—as might have happened—the great actress of her dreams,

she would by no means have been safe from some season of enthusiasm when her laurels would have seemed vain, and when the picture of self-annihilation would have an irresistible charm. If the greatest of women, at the height of their greatness, have not always felt this the most, then my whole reading of human nature is as wrong as Phœbe's. And if a convent or any sort of sisterhood had been at hand, and open to receive her, the enthusiasm would have lasted long enough to carry her in, and to keep her there until her wings should have time to grow again.

In the matter of this desire she might have taken Ersaile into her confidence; but she had never yet put a desire into words, and, even if the present strength of her wish had not made her especially shy, her employer's increasing coldness of manner was enough to freeze her words. But she kept hanging about the subject; and, while turning over fresh supplies of linen from the wash, asked Mrs. Hughes:

"Did you ever happen to know a nun?"

"A what, Miss Vernon? Oh, I know what you mean; one of those poor mistaken creatures that they brick up in a wall with bread and water, and cut off their hair. Where I come from, down in the country, they used to find their bones, but I never saw one alive. I don't suppose I should be alive very long myself if I was bricked up in a wall; there ought to be a law made against such doings. Not that one need be bricked up in a wall to starve. It's my belief that if a man doesn't eat enough to keep body and soul together, they'll find his bones somewhere before very long."

Phœbe remembered the story, in one of her books, of a nun who had been buried alive, so that she was not taken by surprise. But then that had happened in a foreign country and a long time ago, and her old books had lost her confidence to even a greater degree than they deserved. So the risk of meeting with the doom of Sister Serafina at the hands of the Inquisitor-General of the Jesuits, did not prevent her from noticing that Mrs. Hughes had been referring to some case of insufficient nourishment within her own knowledge.

"Has Mr. Hughes lost his appetite?" asked Phœbe. "Isn't he well?"

"John Hughes? John Hughes, Miss Vernon, does lose lots of things—there's his temper, and his wits, and my time,

and, when he was young, more situations than a dozen men would have the chance of keeping ; but never his appetite—never for an hour. Bless your heart alive, miss, he cuts, and he comes again. It's the front attic that's sitting heavy on my mind."

No doubt it is quite possible for a seamstress by calling to take a purely professional interest in the single gentleman whom she does for. But, when this stocking represents a day-dream, and that an attempt to fathom the purpose and end of the universe, and this button despair, and that patch an act of hope and aspiration, it is hardly possible to avoid extending one's sympathies from the clothes to their wearer. There must needs be a special personality about the unknown attic who wore the webs that Phœbe wove ; it seemed scarcely possible but that some subtle influence should not connect him with her, no less than her with him. So she was more interested in the front attic than if his increasingly ragged raiment had been innocent of her patching and darning.

"Is he ill ?" asked she, "or poor ?"

"It's sad to think of," said Mrs. Hughes, "but I'm near driven to think he can't afford both my rent and his own dinner, and that he's so unlike the rest of them that he lets the dinner go."

"Hasn't he any friends ? But of course not, people never have that want them," said Phœbe, arguing from herself to the world at large. "And you really believe that he starves ?"

"I don't know what to think of it," said Mrs. Hughes. "One day I think one thing, and the next I think another. That's what makes him on my mind, and what to do I don't know. Keep a man for nothing I can't and I won't ; and yet there's other things I can't do neither."

"Of course not," said Phœbe. "What sort of a person is he ? Is he old ? He must be rather large according to his clothes."

"Yes, he is big ; at least he must have been when those clothes were new. I don't suppose he'll see sixty again, and that's a bad time to find oneself at the bottom of the hill."

Phœbe asked no more questions then. The barest sketch was enough to provide her with a finished picture, to complete at leisure in her own room. The picture she evolved from Mrs. Hughes's rough outlines was a very sad one indeed—that of a lonely old man, too proud to beg, too

honest to postpone debt to dinner, and dying by inches of pride and honesty. She remembered also that he was an author, and she had not failed to gather from her books a certain traditional knowledge concerning those who wrote them. Surely there must, at last, be somebody worse off than she, who had two guineas a week, ample leisure, youth still before her—among all her troubles she had never happened to starve.

"It is horrible to think that under the same roof there should be one person growing richer and richer every week, while another should be unable to get his daily bread," thought she, kept awake in her bed by a new problem. "When one person hasn't enough, nobody else ought to have more. But what can I do ?"

The new question was harder to answer than how to become a nun. It by no means kept her awake all night, but it returned to her at breakfast-time in a way that made her ashamed of having two eggs to eat when probably the attic had no eggs at all. And yet it was impossible to send up an egg to the attic with the compliments of the second floor.

Why should thinking and planning always be so easy—action always so hard ? Her philanthropic plans had been blocked up by a plain boiled egg ; and yet she felt that if she could not contrive to trample over the obstacle somehow, all her newfound peace would be gone.

Esdale did not require her services that day—indeed, for some time past, her office had been gradually fading into a sinecure—so that her view of the ordinary relations of painter and model were among the very wildest of all her romances. There was nothing for her but to consult once more with Mrs. Hughes.

But unhappily Mrs. Hughes was in a bad temper that day.

"I don't see any call to have a coroner's inquest in this house," said she ; "and that'll be the end of things if they don't change. It's my belief he's not so poverty-stricken as he seems, for he had money last night, and when he'd paid his weekly bill, instead of spending what was over on a good rump steak, he had a bottle of brandy. And then, instead of drinking that, or even drawing the cork, he threw bottle and all straight out of window into the back garden. He might have killed somebody. And the noise the cats made was as if it was the end of the world."

"Does he drink much ?" asked Phœbe.

"Not a drop, to my knowledge. But better drink than waste," said Mrs. Hughes. "He's getting too queer to please me. I'll give him notice to quit before he throws the whole house out of the window, and perhaps suicide and murder to follow. John Hughes does queer things himself, and I've known him throw a bottle out of window too ; but then that was an empty one."

Once more Phoebe fancied she could see the whole picture more clearly than Mrs. Hughes. That waste of good liquor looked like an act of self-conquest, and therefore with the touch of the heroic about it that was certain to go to her heart even though she had ceased to consider herself a heroine. All that it must have meant to the man himself not even her fancy could comprehend ; but she could understand a little. At any rate this front attic could not be altogether like all the other men whom she had known. Phil, for instance, would never have bought the bottle ; Phil's father would never have thrown it away. Here was a combination of weakness and strength which, inventing and colouring it as she went along, filled her with pity. "Old, friendless, penniless, tempted, and starving!" thought she. "And I can do nothing for him but make his clothes last a little while longer—and not much longer now."

At last, after a long holiday, she received a summons to attend the studio.

"So you are still at large, Miss Vernon ?" asked Esaile. "I expected you would have had enough of liberty by this time. Well, since you are here, you shall give me half an hour. Of course I'm not going to trespass upon your confidence, but don't you begin to find liberty a little dull ?"

"I'm only too well off," said she. "But do you never paint anything but women ? Do you never have to paint old men ?"

"Old men ! Why ?"

"Because I know an old man—very old and very poor—who wants help badly ; and sitting here made me think that he might take my place for a little while—"

"Well ?"

"Mr. Hughes could tell you about him. He's lodging there. I've never seen him myself ; but I am afraid he has to go for days together without a meal."

"Then he certainly ought to make a good anatomical study. No, I don't happen to want any poor old men ; and, as

you haven't seen him, let me tell you, Miss Vernon, that we choose models on the principle of their being useful to us, not of our being useful to them. And London is so full of men very old and very poor that my employing one out of charity would be an obvious injustice to the others, unless I employed them all. He pays his rent, I hope ? I shouldn't like Mrs. Hughes to be done."

"Every week, as punctually as Monday comes round. And Mrs. Hughes told me only last night that he has lived on one loaf for three days. This is London, and a man is allowed to starve !"

"It is a free country, Miss Vernon. If a man chooses to starve himself to feed his landlady, that is his own affair."

"You mean to say there is nothing to be done ? It is horrible——"

"Think a minute. If the man's like the common run, he'll soon let us all know that he wants help, and how to help him. If he isn't—and that's very possible—he'll avoid help like the plague, and resent it like an insult. So there is a great deal to be done. Wait and see."

And nothing but worldly wisdom could she get out of Esaile, who certainly was not the man to commit consciously, deliberately, and without some sort of prudential excuse, any act of charity—at least openly. He soon changed the subject, and then, drifting into his usual silence, kept, as it were, this very poor old man at bay. But his coldness had for once the effect of adding fuel to Phoebe's zeal, and the suggestion that her fellow-lodger might be starving out of pride as well as out of honesty touched her still more.

The hoard she was accumulating for her own future use was turning red-hot in its drawer. Wait and see, indeed, how long it takes to degrade a proud man into a beggar ! This was the true tragedy—the true injustice of the world, and she could not look back upon her own well-fed troubles for very shame. She passed a great confectioner's, with a view of food enough in the window, and a prospect of more than enough through the door, to make waiting, in such a case, a crime and a sin. She could not wait even to think, and was presently ordering more soup, cutlets, and cakes to be sent to Mrs. Hughes's than one hungry man, however old and poor, could demolish in a day.

"When you send it," said she, drawing out her purse, and calling upon her ever ready fancy to do its duty, "please tell

whoever opens the door, that it's all right, and—no, you needn't say anything," she interrupted herself, feeling that her story was going to be both complex and lame, and struck with what appeared to be the prospect of a really excellent stratagem. "Only let it be at the house exactly at two."

Exactly at two o'clock she was at her window, which commanded an excellent view of the street in both directions, and it was thus Phœbe, and neither Mrs. Hughes nor Mrs. Hughes's girl, who opened the door to the confectioner's man. Then, when the dishes were safely landed in the passage, she ran down to Mrs. Hughes in the kitchen.

"I have been ordering a dinner for the front attic," said she; "please take it up to him at once, and——"

"Bless my heart!" said Mrs. Hughes, following her upstairs, and gazing at the feast in dismay; "am I to take him up that? Why, what am I to say? But it don't matter what, he'll send it all flying out of the window——"

"Oh no, not when he sees how good the things look, and you can tell him—anything will do. Say you know for a positive fact the things were ordered for him; but you've sworn not to tell till he's eaten them all——"

"If it had only been a couple of plain chops, but one would think you'd been ordering for Queen Victoria. I call that waste, Miss Vernon, and waste's a thing I can't bear to see."

"Nor I," said Phœbe; "and so I've kept things from being wasted on people that don't want them. Pray, dear Mrs. Hughes, carry them up—now—before they spoil."

"To be sure I would, since your money's spent and gone, but I shall only have to bring them down again."

"Then suppose you say nothing. Lay them down on the table, and say, 'These are for you,' and walk out again. Or suppose you lay them out, and say you're under orders not to stir from the spot till you've seen him begin."

"And when he does ask who ordered them——"

"Say anything you like, but don't, for the world, say it's me. Say it was somebody mysterious—unknown. Please, Mrs. Hughes, think how hungry the poor old fellow must be, and all for your sake, Mrs. Hughes."

"It strikes me, Miss Vernon, if you were as sensible as you're kindly meaning,

you'd be a wise young woman, and if you were no more kind meaning than you're sensible, unkind wouldn't be the word for you. Well, I'll be foolish myself for once, it's not so often."

"Thank you, and I'll help you carry the things upstairs. Depend upon it, he won't refuse what the fairies and the ravens bring him, though no doubt he would if he thought it came from charity. And that's why you mustn't mention names. It is a long journey. Is this his door? Then I'll run down again."

It was the most exciting affair in which Phœbe had ever been engaged. Not even when the life of Stanislas Adrianski had been at stake had she forgotten her own self more completely. Would this poor proud old man—for it need not be said that she had given him a very complete personality, not forgetting a more finished mental portrait of him than Esdaile could have painted with the live model before him—would this hungry attic accept the free gifts of the fairies and the ravens, yes or no?

But the answer came more quickly than she hoped or feared. Mrs. Hughes could scarcely have had time to open the attic's door than she stumbled down the stairs, empty-handed, and burst in at Phœbe's.

"Oh, Miss Vernon, I always said he'd do it, and he has done it now."

"He has thrown them out of window?"

"Worse than that, he's thrown poison down his inside!"

"Poison!" cried Phœbe, turning faint and cold.

"I knew how it would be. And the girl's out, and John Hughes at the studio, and if I go for a doctor——"

"Go back to him at once, I'll go for a doctor. Where shall I go?"

"You'd better take a hansom, miss, and drive straight to Dr. Ronaine, that's a friend of Mr. Esdaile, and bring him back. Perhaps we'll get out of an inquest that way."

"Yes—where?"

"Sixteen, Savage Street; not six minutes' drive."

Phœbe was out of the house and in a hansom without knowing how, and in less than six minutes, by rare good luck, she had reached the street and the number. She took no heed of the unprofessional surroundings of the doctor's dwelling, and, having been merely told on what floor he would be found, flew upstairs faster than she had flown down.

"Dr. Ronaine," she cried out, seeing a man in the middle of a sort of chaos, "you are wanted instantly."

"Phoebe!" exclaimed a well-known voice.  
The man in the middle of chaos was Phil.

### ROMEO COATES.

THERE has always been a line of eccentrics connected with the stage, whom this profession made yet more eccentric. Among these may be counted its temporary follower, the eminent amateur—Mr. Romeo Coates. His proceedings form a most singular episode, scarcely creditable to the public which encouraged him, or to himself. It is difficult—as we read of him now—to feel whether contempt or pity should most prevail. No amateur in our day, whether wealthy or titled, would be tolerated an instant if he indulged in such antics; nay, our public is inclined to be over severe, and deals savagely with even professionals.

A lively memoir writer, who had seen adventures of his own, Mr. Pryce Gordon, tells us that he was the person who first brought out the "Amateur," considering it, he says, one of the "most singular circumstances in his life."

"In the year 1809," he says, "I was at Bath, and lodged at the York House, where I found this gentleman an inmate, and we generally met in the coffee-room at breakfast. He shortly attracted my notice by rehearsing passages from Shakespeare during his morning meals, with a tone and gesture extremely striking both to the eye and ear; and though we were strangers to each other, I could not help complimenting him on the beauty of his recitations, although he did not always stick to his author's text. On one occasion I took the liberty of correcting a passage from Romeo and Juliet. 'Aye,' said he, 'that is the reading, I know, for I have the whole play by heart; but I think I have improved upon it.' I bowed with submission, acknowledging that I was not a profound critic. This led into a dissertation on the merits of this fine tragedy, when Mr. Coates informed me that he had frequently performed the part of Romeo at Antigua, of which island, he said, he was a native, adding that he always travelled with the dress of that character. I lamented that, with the extraordinary talents which he seemed to possess, he had not gratified the

English public with a specimen of his powers, or joined the amateurs of private theatricals, and mentioned Mr. Methuen, who made a great noise at the time as a first-rate performer.

"'I am ready and willing,' replied our Roscius, 'to play Romeo to a Bath audience, if the manager will get up the play and give me a good Juliet; my costume is superb, and adorned with diamonds, but I have not the advantage of knowing the manager.'"

Mr. Gordon then offered him a letter of introduction to the manager of the Bath Theatre, which Coates accepted, but he presently returned indignant at the reception he had met with. His new friend, however, declared he would arrange the matter. He called on Mr. Scrope Davies and some other persons of fashion in the place, who at once agreed to take boxes for the occasion, and thus fortified, procured the manager's consent.

Accordingly Mr. Dimond, having made his peace with the debutant, advertised "that a gentleman of fashion would make his appearance for the first time in England," and every box was speedily secured.

"I contrived," goes on Mr. Gordon, "with the assistance of my friends, to plant in the centre of the pit a score of abigails and butlers, who with a large party in the lower boxes received Romeo on his appearance on the stage with three distinct peals of applause. Never was a greater furore heard in the Bath Theatre, even in the best days of Mrs. Siddons. The first act went off quietly, but as the play proceeded, there were some symptoms of displeasure from the gallery, which were hissed down by the better bred part of the audience. In the balcony scene, some rascals, envious, no doubt, of the amateur actor, hissed in their turn, and threw apples and orange-peels on the stage; others encored certain passages, laughed when they ought to have wept, and some individuals from a side box were extremely rude in calling 'Off! off!' Romeo, who had hitherto conducted himself with great equanimity, could no longer submit to such ungenerous behaviour; turned to the box from whence these sounds proceeded, and crossing his arms, looked at the offending party with great scorn and contempt, when the curtain dropped amidst thundering applause.

"In act fifth, when the hero seizes a crow (this is a vulgar name for the instru-

ment) to break into Juliet's tomb, the clamour was so great, that the drop fell to rise no more! Fortunately Mr. Coates had excellent nerves, and treated his critics with the contempt they merited, receiving the congratulations of the most respectable part of the spectators with a 'modest assurance.'

"A few nights after this unexpected defeat, there was a private subscription-ball at the York House, of which I had the honour of being one of the managers, under the direction of four lady patronesses, who instructed me to invite Mr. Coates to this fête, in token of their high approbation of his merits. He accepted the invitation, and on my suggestion, appeared in the costume of Romeo. After supper he was prevailed on by the ladies to spout 'Bucks have at you all'; and mounted on the table, among the glasses and decanters, 'and other sweetmeats,' he gave this recitation."

Next, this poor creature, who was surely mad, was induced to come to London and exhibit himself there. He advertised himself in the streets in a sort of curricle fashioned like a triumphal car, ornamented in the most gorgeous style. Finally he was induced to come forward at the Richmond Theatre as Romeo.

"On September 4th a dramatic amateur, Mr. Coates, a gentleman of fortune and honour, was induced to perform the part of Romeo, at the Richmond Theatre. All the boxes were taken before the fact had been regularly announced in the Play Bills, upon the mere credit of a private rumour that such an event would occur! Nearly all the fashion and beauty of this Surrey Frescati, and its environs, were there; and we were happy to behold that a few dashing quizzers, who, flushed with the Tuscan grape, came for the palpable purpose of ridiculing the miseries of two scenic loves, were greatly disappointed by the correctness of much of the representation; and though they had the indecent cruelty to laugh when Romeo poisoned himself, yet the sighs of commiseration with which he was greeted by the ladies from the boxes, pit, and galleries, in his dying moments, was more than an equivalent for their want of taste, liberality, and sympathy.

"Mr. Coates then favoured the audience with a recital of that descriptive monologue, called, 'Bucks have at ye all; or, a Picture of a Play House,' in which he ingeniously contrived to give these

noisy companions a Rowland for their Oliver.

"Ye Bucks of the Boxes there (pointing) who roar and reel,  
Too drunk to listen, and too proud to feel!  
Whose flinty hearts are proof against despair!  
Whose vast estates are—neither here nor there!  
Who drive with four in hand, as moderns must,  
Smother Philosophy, and take the dust!  
Who brave the Demon, and his troop below,  
Yet tremble at John Doe and Richard Roe!  
Talk slang with Grooms! Old Granny Justice  
hoax;

And graduate with Coachmen on the box!  
Cut out a midge's eye upon the wing!  
Who pamper prize-fighters, and keep their ring!  
Who scatter Fortune's precious gifts abroad!  
Who quiz the Virtues, and give soup to Fraud!  
Coax a young Cit to dine, who'd cut a dash,  
Then call for dice, and poll him of his cash!  
Such high-ton'd joys and elegance be thine  
To pay my tradesmen, and be just, is mine.  
No Creditor, depriv'd of honest bread,  
Marks my swoln arrogance, and shakes his  
head!

Chacun à son gout!—Say, is't not well?  
You shout 'Push on! I! Vive la bagatelle!'

But then he was next prevailed on to appear at the Haymarket—an unbecoming and undignified exhibition, which should not have been tolerated by the managers of so respectable a house.

"Coates appeared, for the first time, in the arduous character of the gallant, gay Lothario, at the Haymarket Theatre, for the benefit of a lady; and no circumstance hath produced such an irregular movement in the fashionable world, since the appearance of Sir Francis Blake Deleval, in the part of Othello, in Mr. Garrick's time.

"On this occasion there was much tumult and shouting, and rudeness exercised by the rougher part of the audience, many of whom evidently came there for the purpose of exciting a riot, and annoying Mr. Coates! But the treason was not confined to the insurgents of the pit and galleries, for they had their adherents behind the scenes. There was the greatest concourse of persons who laboured to get into the Theatre on this memorable night that has been known for many years. It was supposed that upwards of one thousand individuals were turned from the box entrance without the possibility of being admitted. Five pounds and lesser sums were repeatedly offered at the stage door for a single admission behind the scenes. Ladies and gentlemen of distinction were mingled with the occupants of the first and second galleries.

"Among the brilliant company in the boxes, we perceived the Duke of Brunswick, the Duke of Devonshire, the Portuguese Ambassador, the Earl of Kinnoul and

family, Lord Castlereagh, the Baron de Gerambe, Sir Godfrey Webster, Mrs. Siddons, and others."

As Mr. Coates deemed himself unfairly treated, he published the following letter.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING  
HERALD.

"SIR,—Various gross misrepresentations having appeared relative to my late performance of *Lothario* at the Haymarket Theatre, I beg leave to offer a refutation of them through the medium of your valuable and fashionable Paper.

"It has been asserted, that when I addressed the audience, I said, 'that because I acted from a motive of benevolence, I ought to be applauded,' but the truth is, that I merely said :

"Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a very unusual thing for a Gentleman, placed in my situation in life, to appear before you on a public stage. . . . If it is the wish of the Nobility and Gentry that the Play should be concluded, and those noisy people will leave the Theatre and have their money returned, I will undertake to make up the deficiency to the widow. And permit me likewise to say, that I hope soon to gratify my feelings, by playing at the King's Theatre for the relief of the widows and orphans of our brave countrymen; and also of our Allies, who have so nobly shed their blood in the common cause.'

"That there was a conspiracy formed previous to the night's representation, for the shameful purpose of creating a tumult in the theatre at all events, can scarcely be doubted by any who were present at that outrage. It appeared that there were about thirty or forty fellows placed in the pit and galleries, who were determined to keep up one continued roar, and annoy the dignified and sober part of the audience by clamour and insolence; for the acting of Miss Sidney, or Mr. Scriven, was not more applauded than my own feeble endeavours to please, though neither of them would disgrace their profession at either of the Theatres; that comparative species of delicacy which is observed towards females, even by savages, was wholly disdained and disregarded by these rioters! Every thing upon the stage, on that occasion, was to be particularly reprobated, although the efforts to entertain (even were they ineffectual) were exerted in a cause of benevolence, to which none need have subscribed who were averse to such virtuous purposes.

"It is evident from the trial of Macklin versus Leigh and others, that the law of the land does not authorise such wanton measures. The situation of an actor would be truly miserable, if it were in the power of a band of tipsy wretches to issue from a tavern or cabaret, and drive a good man from his lawful occupation, whenever their hatred or caprice might urge them to be inimical or unjust.

"In regard to the innumerable attacks that have been made upon my lineaments and person in the public prints, I have only to observe, that as I was fashioned by the Creator, independent of my will, I cannot be responsible for that result which I could not control. If the Gentlemen who amuse themselves in this noble way can derive either pleasure or profit from the indulgence of such a spirit, I will never descend to molest them in the furtherance of such desires. I regard the liberty of the press as the key-stone of that arch upon which our glorious constitution reposes in security; and I will not, lightly, question the extent of that liberty, because envy, or folly, or even a viler passion, may stimulate a blockhead to violate the purity of such a privilege.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

"ROBERT COATES."

His ridiculous antics, especially in his dying scene, have been often described. As he was greeted with shouts of ironical applause and encores he would gravely rise, dust the ground with his handkerchief, and go through the whole scene again. At assemblies this extraordinary figure was noticed for his extravagant display of jewels; "shoe and knee buckles, brooches, and rings, and sword-handle" all of diamonds. This, no doubt, accounted for the interest the Duke of Brunswick, another "jewel fancier," took in his performances.

It was determined to burlesque so tempting an object of ridicule on the stage, and Mathews was given a farce, written by the Rev. Bate Dudley, and went to the Haymarket to study his original.

One sitting proved to be sufficient, and the ingenious mimic appeared as the Romeo Rantall dressed in a fur great-coat, etc., and spoke and sang in a most diverting way.

After giving an address in the perfect style of the original, in tone, looks, attitudes, gestures, and movements, not

forgetting an interchange of salutations with friends in the stage-boxes, Mr. Mathews withdrew, and came out again in the splendid attire of Mr. Coates's Lothario—pink silk vest and cloak, white satin breeches and stockings, Spanish hat, with a rich high plume of ostrich feathers. In this attire he enacted the principal scenes of Lothario, in the whole of which he was Coates to the very life. The effect was amusing to the highest degree, convulsing the great majority of the audience with laughter. A considerable party, however, manifested a strong opposite feeling. The piece, nevertheless, was given out for representation with a great prevalence of deserved applause.

The vanity of the person thus ridiculed was stronger than his resentment, and he actually presented himself at the performance in a stage-box.

It had been a custom of the theatre, Mathews tells us, to send some well-dressed person into a stage-box nightly, that Mr. Romeo Rantall might be sure of a friend to shake hands with, though sometimes a good-humoured stranger would allow his hand to be taken. On this occasion Mr. Mathews walked up to the box where Mr. Coates was seated, and where the appointed gentleman was also placed, and proffering his hand so as to make it doubtful which of the two persons he meant to claim, Mr. Coates seized it with the greatest good-humour, shaking it most cordially, to the uproarious entertainment of the audience; witnessing also the "encore" to the dying-scene, apparently as much amused as the audience.

But a more singular exhibition was the following one. Some festivities were being given at Stratford in honour of Shakespeare, when he sent the people word that he would perform Romeo for them, written, as he stated, "by that immortal bard, Shakespeare, the pride and glory of Stratford—and not only Stratford, but the British empire. Mr. Coates will leave London for the express purpose of gratifying the inhabitants of Stratford, and in honour of the birthplace of the great poet." After he had acted, he was determined to have a procession all by himself, a minor pageant in imitation of the jubilee; and walked, dressed as Romeo, from the barn to the house where Shakespeare was born. Here he wrote his name on the walls, and in the book kept for that purpose, called himself "the illustrator of the poet;" complained of the house; said that

it was not good enough for the divine bard to have been born in, and proposed to pull it down at his own expense, and build it up again, so as to appear more worthy of such a being! He went to the church; wrote his name on the monument; and—being inspired—on the tablet, close to the pen in the right hand of the bard, wrote:

His name in ambient air still floats.  
And is adored by Robert Coates.

When the Prince Regent was giving one of his celebrated fêtes, that eminent hoaxer, Theodore Hook, prepared an invitation imitating the original form, which was despatched to the unfortunate Coates. On the night in question, the latter arrayed in all his magnificence repaired to the gala; but the forgery was at once detected, and he was turned out with much ignominy. When the matter was reported to the royal host, he in his usual gentlemanly way expressed his sorrow at the trick, and despatched a message to Mr. Coates to that effect, inviting him also to come the following day and see the decorations.

After this incident we learn little more of him. He was said to have married a lady of fortune, and become less eccentric.

Lord William Lennox, who so recently passed away, described meeting him at the theatre many years later, when he was struck by the wretched, haggard appearance of the once "fashionable amateur."

On going home that night Mr. Coates met with an accident, from the effects of which he never recovered. When his demise occurred I am not able to say.

#### ABOUT NAMES AND NICKNAMES.

WE have always been of opinion that one particular passage of Shakespeare's works, in which the poet appears to exhibit a less accurate knowledge of human nature than is usual with him, has been most unaccountably overlooked by his commentators and critics; we allude to that often quoted but to our mind irrational exclamation of Juliet, "What's in a name?" Why the Bard of Avon should have put into the mouth of the heroine of Verona a phrase which must have been completely at variance with his own better judgment has constantly puzzled us, and we can only account for it

by supposing that his object in so doing was to demonstrate how inconsiderately love-sick damsels are apt to talk, especially when, as in this case, they fancy that no one is listening to them.

Leaving, however, further speculations on this suggestive topic to some future Mr. Curdle, and coming down to our own time, we find that whatever prestige the possessor of an undeniably patrician name may in former ages have enjoyed, has in no wise diminished at the present day. Next to money—for the worship of the golden calf is still, we fear, paramount with us—there is no surer passport to success and consideration than a well-authenticated and thoroughly aristocratic patronymic. When His Grace the Duke of Bannockburn condescendingly permits his son, Lord Sawney McHaggis, to officiate behind the counter of a bank, does that quasi-plebeian employment in any way compromise the family dignity? Not a bit; the presence of so illustrious a recruit adds a fresh lustre to the establishment patronised by him; his fellow-clerks are proud of him, and old Mrs. Tufthunt of Clapham Common, when she accidentally learns by whose noble hands her little cheque has been cashed, is out of her wits with joy at having been served by a lord. As long as Becky Sharp's mamma was supposed to have been a Montmorency, was not that more than enough to confer on the little lady's somewhat ambiguous position in society a veneer of traditional respectability? How is it possible that the hotel-keeper at a fashionable watering-place, who counts among his distinguished patrons the Honourable Algernon de Vere, and the no less Honourable Gwendoline Mount-Ararat, can entertain the slightest suspicion that these high-sounding titles are as intrinsically valueless as the portmanteau of the one and the Palais-Royal jewellery of the other; and is he not for the first time aroused from his fancied security by the simultaneous flitting of both guests, naturally prefaced by the non-payment of their respective bills? One would imagine that a man who has been once taken in would profit by the lesson and be more cautious in future; but it is, on the contrary, "all Lombard Street to a China orange" that the next self-titled adventurer who passes his way will find him a ready victim, doomed to expiate his credulity by the melancholy contemplation of accounts "carried over," but never settled, and trunks filled to the brim with paving-stones.

Every one, however, either legitimately or otherwise, is not a Mowbray, a Plantagenet, or a De Vere; but there are crumbs of consolation even for those outside the pale. They may have no ancestral quarterings to boast of, may find a certain difficulty in tracing their origin further than two or three generations back, but why should Smith or Brown despair? They have a remedy in their own hands. No extraordinary amount of ingenuity is required to convert the former into Smythe, and the latter into Browne; and if these are not aristocratic enough to satisfy the most exacting disciple of Sir Bernard Burke or D'Hozier, then is Debrett a bungler, and his Peerage a delusion and a snare. On the other hand, it must be confessed that there are some unfortunate appellations which no power on earth can render tolerable or susceptible of improvement.

With regard to christian-names, in so far as the male sex is concerned, the essential point appears to us to be that they should be few in number, and on no account multiplied according to the fashion in use among Spanish grandees; it is also advisable, in the interest of the bearers, that they should not be far-fetched or suggestive of ridicule, as for instance Polycarp or Nicodemus. Mr. Burnand, in one of his mirthful little books, recounts a visit made by him to a friend in Cornwall, where the three servitors attached to the household of his host were respectively denominated Jehoshaphat, Methusalem, and Jeroboam. We are not sufficiently acquainted with the manners and customs of that portion of the United Kingdom to decide whether this should be regarded as an exceptional case or as a mere matter of course; but we are inclined to think that, supposing such scriptural derivatives to be properly appreciated in those latitudes, individuals indebted for them to their godfathers and godmothers would do well to abandon any project they may possibly have conceived of migrating London-wards with the fallacious hope of "bettering" themselves, and stay where they are. With ladies, of course, it is quite another thing; a pretty name is for them, if not an absolute necessity, at the very least an additional charm. Of these there are legion, all, as the Frenchman remarked of the fascinating amazons in the "Row," "plus jolies les unes que les autres;" but none, to our thinking, more irresistibly attractive than the simple name of Marie, which none can help loving, for is it not

the anagram of "aimer!" For Beatrice, too, we own to a special fondness, suggesting, as it does, memories of Shakespeare, Dante, Shelley, and Bellini. But, whatever be the name, it should be appropriate to the bearer thereof, and here lies the difficulty. For all their sponsors know to the contrary, a Blanche may grow up a brunette, and a Violet a Juno, anomalies regrettable for the sake of the parties concerned, but utterly impossible to foresee. Fortunately, however, there remains plenty to choose from without the risk of any similar mishap; Sybil, Maud, Constance, Edith, Mabel, and a score of others are equally well suited to all degrees of altitude and all shades of complexion, and unquestionably pretty into the bargain; which is more, perhaps, than can be correctly assumed of Tabitha, Deborah, Priscilla, and Kunigund.

For diminutives we must go to the play-bills, for there they are in full force, it being customary nowadays for the majority of young ladies belonging to what we believe is technically termed the "pro" to invite attention to their charming selves by the absorption of a not inconsiderable part of the daily programme, wherein are recorded not only their surnames, but also whatever prefatory adjunct they may owe to their sponsors, or, as in certain cases appears more likely, to their own lively fancy. Here we have, of course, such everyday names as Bessy, Nelly, and Sally in profusion; but even these are respectively modernised into Bessie, Nellie, and Sallie, not to mention a due—or rather overdue—proportion of Lotties, Lillies, and Minnies. Others, more romantic, but not strictly diminutives, are Alma, Nella, and Ella, the latter reminding us of Ella Rosenberg, a melodrama of the days of our youth, and possibly derived therefrom. In short, from the patrician Maud to the modest unassuming Daisy, scarcely a single presentable name is absent from the list, which, in the event of our theatres continuing to increase and multiply as they have been doing for the last six months, will ere long outstrip and completely put to shame the famous catalogue of Leporello.

A word or two about nicknames, and we have done. These may not improperly be divided into three classes, namely, the pleasantly familiar, the unpleasantly ditto, and the incomprehensible. Of the first, "Dizzy" may be taken as an example; of the second, "Nosey" or "Bomba;" and of the third, any meaningless sobri-

quet you choose. Some have merely a local circulation, and are "caviare to the general," others, in the case of public men especially, become household words, and stick like burrs to the bearer until his life's end. When appropriate, they have to a certain extent a *raison d'être*, and are, at all events, intelligible; but what shall we say of those, the origin of which is lost in obscurity, and possessing no apparent signification whatever? Old Etonians of six-and-forty years ago may remember instances in point; few, if any, of the disciples of Keate and Hawtrey having escaped a nickname of one kind or another. Fair-complexioned, curly-headed youths received, we suppose by way of complimentary tribute to their good looks, whatever feminine name first occurred to the imagination of the improvised godfather; among them were a Lucy, a Caroline, half-a-dozen Fannys (one of whom we had the pleasure of meeting the other day, as deaf as a post, and blind as a beetle), and a Venus! So far, if not strictly legitimate, the "Spottnamen," as the Germans facetiously call them, were not absolutely devoid of meaning; nor could the epithet of "Hair," bestowed on a fifth-form exquisite, whose flowing locks were invariably tended by him with ultra-scrupulous care, be objected to as inapplicable; but for what mysterious reason a noble earl of the present day was then universally addressed as "Gubba" or "Gubber" (orthography not guaranteed), and the son of a Vice-Chancellor of England as "Scum," is not so clear. We often wonder if any of these once familiar locutions have survived the wear and tear of years, and if our fast bowler would still recognise himself as "Whacky," and our long stop as "Bull"? Time, alas! has sadly thinned our ranks, and few now remain who recollect the days when Charlie Taylor was the pride of our eleven, and when Lonsdale and Lyttelton, both pupils of the same tutor, triumphantly carried off the scholarship and the medal.

Between 1835 and 1881 the world has had ample leisure to improve, but in the matter of nicknames we doubt its having largely profited by the opportunity. As far as we are able to judge, they seem to us, as a rule, not a whit more appropriate than they used to be; as the following examples, which, did our space permit, might be multiplied indefinitely, will suffice to show. It surely requires a considerable stretch of imagination to understand the

propriety of investing a crack "gentleman rider" with the name of "Bay," presumably in memory of a race-horse famed in the annals of the Turf; nor is it easy to divine why his equally celebrated colleague, on account of his supposed predilection for the canine species, should be arbitrarily christened, "Doggie." These, however, have some sort of foundation, vague though it be, whereas our third and last specimen might puzzle even that most persevering of investigators, an acrostic guesser; for who in the world could possibly assign any admissible reason why one of the most gallant and deservedly popular officers in Her Majesty's service should be familiarly and unceremoniously denominated "Croppy?"

#### MR. FROUDE'S LIFE OF CARLYLE.

WHEN Carlyle died in the February of 1881 less was known to the public of the facts of his life than of that of any other man who had held as commanding a position in the eyes of his countrymen. No formal Life of him had been written. One had been begun, but was stopped at his express desire. The Memoirs which existed were meagre in the extreme. While we now know during their lives almost all that can be known of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright, during the life of Carlyle there was uncertainty as to the simplest facts of his career.

Concerning the personality of the man, however, there need at no time have been any vagueness. Some at least of his books were read by everyone; and no writer ever more clearly revealed himself in his writings. In *Sartor Resartus* there was a personal ring which it was impossible to mistake. The "mythic jottings" did not conceal, and were not intended to conceal, the facts on which they were founded. Entepfuhl was recognised as Ecclefechan; "the little Kuhbach gushing kindly by" was known to be the stream which still flows through the main street of the Dumfriesshire village; Hinterschlag Gymnasium was identified with Annan Academy. The episode of Blumine was too real not to have had its origin in the life of its author (as we now know that it had); and Teufelsdröckh himself was, it was perfectly evident, a faithful likeness of Carlyle. And in one mood, that which possessed him in the prison, Jonson, the hero of the earliest piece of Carlyle's, was but the image of his

creator. In the same manner his own personality shines through all his literary essays. We find him a most catholic critic. He helps us to comprehend characters as various as those of Mahomet and Voltaire, Johnson and Diderot, Burns and Boswell; but in making us acquainted with these he makes us also acquainted with himself.

So, too, in *The French Revolution* we can clearly see the Titanic mind of the artist at work. His imagination ranges through earth and heaven in search of terrific metaphors; and in all the heat and fury of the struggle he can turn aside to mourn over the flight of time and the hard lot of man. Everywhere in his works Carlyle shows us himself—in *The Latter-Day Pamphlets* as accurately as in *Heroes and Hero-Worship*.

Considering therefore how ample were the opportunities at the command of the public for informing themselves concerning the character of Carlyle, it is difficult to account for the clamour raised on the publication by Mr. Froude of the *Reminiscences* except on the hypothesis that the public in general were really little acquainted with one branch of Carlyle's writings. Though everyone had read *Sartor Resartus* and *Hero-Worship*, comparatively few had read *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, *Shooting Niagara*, or *The Nigger Question*.

The anger, indeed, of some persons on the publication of the *Reminiscences* was easily to be understood. It was natural that the Martin family should resent the manner in which some of them had been spoken of; it was natural that Mrs. Procter should stigmatise as "malignant lies" some of the references to her late husband and some of Carlyle's earliest friends; it was natural, too, that Mr. Swinburne (whom nobody could accuse of sympathy with Carlyle's moral aims) should print sonnets bidding memory to "spit on the dead snake" who had defiled the deathless names of Shelley, Wordsworth, and Lamb. The irritation of the general public was less rational, though it too was natural. None but cynics—and the masses are not cynical—are pleased to discover that a man with whose name they are familiar, and whose character they esteem, had the common faults of his kind, some of them in an unusual degree.

It is impossible not to join to some extent, and on some grounds, in the general condemnation of Mr. Froude for the publication of the *Reminiscences*. In

the first place the volumes were issued in such haste that they had not received the ordinary correction for the press, and they abounded in the grossest misprints. The bitter sayings were allowed to stand just as Carlyle had written them, certainly not with the intention of having them published without "fit editing;" and the omission of a name here and there would, without in any way destroying the biographical value of the work, have saved much pain to many persons. Finally the Reminiscences should not have been published by themselves. They should have been incorporated with the materials contained in the two volumes which Mr. Froude has lately published under the title *Thomas Carlyle: a History of the First Forty-five Years of His Life, 1795-1835*. As it is, these two works are supplementary. There was much in the Reminiscences which Mr. Froude has been obliged to transfer bodily to the newer work in order to render the narrative consecutive; there are many points he has been obliged to pass over too hastily in the History, for fear of repeating what has already been said in the Reminiscences.

Bungling such as this was not to have been expected from a literary artist like Mr. Froude. It would almost appear that his object in issuing the Reminiscences so soon after Carlyle's death was to warn other biographers off the ground. But there is another ground on which the publication of the Reminiscences appears injudicious. We think it will be generally admitted that while there is nothing in Mr. Froude's recent volumes which tends to make us form any essentially different estimate of Carlyle to that formed after reading the Reminiscences, we yet gain a softer and more sympathetic, and at the same time a clearer view of him from these volumes than from the Reminiscences. And this, beyond doubt, is owing to the elucidations which Mr. Froude has scattered up and down the volumes. Had he produced one complete work from all the materials at his command, adding, wherever necessary, his own explanations and comments, we should have been spared a considerable part of the outcry raised by the critics and the public.

For the manner in which Mr. Froude has performed his task in these recent volumes there can be nothing but praise. Here is his own account of the work he had to do:

"When a man has exercised a large influence on the minds of his contemporaries,

the world requires to know whether his own action has corresponded with his teaching, and whether his moral and personal character entitles him to confidence. This is not idle curiosity; it is a legitimate demand. In proportion to a man's greatness is the scrutiny to which his conduct is submitted. Byron, Burns, Scott, Shelley, Rousseau, Voltaire, Goethe, Pope, Swift are but instances, to which a hundred others might be added, showing that the public will not be satisfied without sifting the history of its men of genius to the last grain of fact which can be ascertained about them. The publicity of their private lives has been, is, and will be, either the reward or the penalty of their intellectual distinction. Carlyle knew that he could not escape. Since a Life of him there would certainly be, he wished it to be as authentic as possible. Besides the Memoir of Mrs. Carlyle, he had written several others, mainly autobiographical, not distinctly to be printed, but with no fixed purpose that they should not be printed. These, with his journals and the whole of his correspondence, he made over to me, with unfettered discretion to use in any way that I might think good. In the papers thus in my possession, Carlyle's history, external and spiritual, lay out before me as in a map. By recasting the entire material, by selecting chosen passages out of his own and his wife's letters, by exhibiting the fair and beautiful side of the story only, it would have been easy, without suppressing a single material point, to draw a picture of a faultless character. When a devil's advocate has said his worst against Carlyle, he leaves a figure still of unblemished integrity, purity, loftiness of purpose, and inflexible resolution to do right, as of a man living consciously under his Maker's eye, and with his thoughts fixed on the account which he would have to render of his talents. Of a person of whom malice must acknowledge so much as this, the prickly aspects might fairly be passed by in silence; and if I had studied my own comfort and the pleasure of my immediate readers, I should have produced a portrait as agreeable, and at least as faithful as those of the favoured saints in the Catholic calendar. But it would have been a portrait without individuality—an ideal, or, in other words, an 'idol,' to be worshipped one day and thrown away the next. Least of all could such idealising be ventured with Carlyle, to whom untruth of any kind was abominable. If he was

to be known at all, he chose to be known as he was, with his angularities, his sharp speeches, his special peculiarities, meritorious or unmeritorious, precisely as they had actually been."

Here Mr. Froude quotes the well-known passage from Carlyle's review of Lockhart's Life of Walter Scott, in which Carlyle himself lays down the conditions under which a biographer must do his work if he would do it honestly. By the principles laid down in this passage Mr. Froude declares that he has been guided. He has been accused of unfriendliness and cynicism. The charge is altogether unjust. He has been simply honest. Our great men never will remain, even if we wished that they should, mere voices speaking to us from their retirement. The public will know all about men of genius, and if we have their lives told to us by sympathetic as well as honest and able narrators, we can in reason ask no more. Mr. Froude is sympathetic, honest, and able, and these volumes of his are models of that kind of biography, which is the favourite nowadays, in which the hero discloses his own character almost in his own words, with merely a comment, in the nature, as Mr. Froude himself says, of the remarks of the chorus in a Greek play, thrown in here and there. Mr. Froude's comments are always judicious, and his high literary reputation will suffer no loss through this work.

It was said near the beginning of this paper, that, to those who had studied his life, the Reminiscences threw no new light upon the personality of Carlyle as it can be traced in his writings. That is perfectly true; and the same observation applies to the book with which we are now dealing. But though neither of these books tell us anything new about Carlyle's character, they tell us everything about the circumstances and influences which had so large a share in making his character what it was.

The most powerful influences of his childhood were the Hebrew Scripture and the theology of Calvin. The remarkable figures of Carlyle's father and mother stand out clearly in Mr. Froude's pages, and the village life at Ecclefechan is realised for us by a few picturesque descriptions. "It was not a joyful life," Carlyle says: "what life is? Yet a safe and quiet one, above most others, or any other I have witnessed, a wholesome one. We were taciturn rather than talkative, but if little was said that little had generally a meaning. More remarkable man than my

father I have never met in my journey through life; sterling sincerity in thought, word, and deed, most quiet, but capable of blazing into whirlwinds when needful, and such a flash of just insight, and brief natural eloquence and emphasis, true to every feature of it as I have never known in any other. Humour of a most grim Scandinavian type he occasionally had; wit, rarely or never—too serious for wit—my excellent mother with perhaps the deeper piety in most senses had also the most sport. No man of my day, or hardly any man, can have had better parents." From the care of the Rev. Mr. Johnstone of Ecclefechan, Carlyle passed to the Academy at Annan, and thence to Edinburgh University, in his fourteenth year. At Annan he was a solitary, morbid boy, the butt of the "coarse, unguided, tyrannous cubs," his schoolfellows. At Edinburgh he read enormously outside the University curriculum, and still retained his morbid shrinking nature. Although he studied mathematics with the utmost ardour he carried off no prizes. "He tried only once, and though he was notoriously superior to all his competitors, the crowd and noise of the class-room prevented him from even attempting to distinguish himself." Then, during this student-time came his first meeting with Edward Irving, and his subsequent appointment to a schoolmastership at Kirkcaldy, where Irving was already established. On the time he spent at Kirkcaldy, and the maturing of his friendship with Irving there, Carlyle has written fully himself in the Reminiscences, and Mr. Froude passes lightly over this period.

Carlyle did not get on evenly with his task of schoolmastering at Kirkcaldy. He was proud, sarcastic, and quick-tempered, and took no pains to make himself agreeable to the townsfolk. His life here, however, was chequered by the one bit of real romance which ever visited him—the episode so characteristically told in Sartor Resartus, where the heroine figures as Blumine. The incident of the kiss described at the end of the chapter called "Romance"—the kiss which Carlyle says, unconsciously borrowing the expression Marlowe puts into the mouth of Faustus, made Teufelsdröckh immortal—is probably mythic; but there was an undoubtedly attachment on both sides. We cannot forbear quoting part of the letter in which Miss Gordon bade farewell to the young schoolmaster. It shows remarkable insight into his character, and is truly prophetic: "And now, my dear

friend, a long, long adieu ; one advice, and as a parting one consider, value it. Cultivate the milder dispositions of your heart. Subdue the more extravagant visions of the brain. In time your abilities must be known. Among your acquaintance they are already beheld with wonder and delight. By those whose opinion will be valuable, they hereafter will be appreciated. Genius will render you great. May virtue render you beloved ! Remove the awful distance between you and ordinary men by kind and gentle manners. Deal gently with their inferiority, and be convinced they will respect you as much and like you more. Why conceal the real goodness that flows in your heart ? I have ventured this counsel from an anxiety for your future welfare, and I would enforce it with all the earnestness of the most sincere friendship. Let your light shine before men, and think them not unworthy the trouble. This exercise will prove its own reward. It must be a pleasing thing to live in the affections of others. Again adieu. Pardon the freedom I have used, and when you think of me be it as a kind sister, to whom your happiness will always yield delight, and your grief sorrow." They met twice after this parting, and Carlyle wrote : "I saw her recognisable to me here in her London time, 1840 or so, twice ; once with her maid in Piccadilly promenading—little altered ; a second time that same year, or next, on horseback both of us, and meeting in the gate of Hyde Park, when her eyes (but that was all) said to me almost touchingly, 'Yes, yes, that is you.'"

The above passage from Miss Gordon's letter shows us exactly how Carlyle was regarded by his friends. All of them felt his genius, and all of them suffered at times from his ill-temper. That he himself was wretched during this period there is much to show. He had already fallen a victim to dyspepsia ; a disorder of which he never entirely got rid. Religious doubts came thick upon him. He had no clear outlook for the future. He had resolved after a time to die in the ditch rather than continue schoolmastering. He finally abandoned the idea of entering the ministry, the profession his mother ardently desired to see him adopt. He played for a time with the law, but found no satisfaction in it, and finally accepted the post of tutor to Charles Buller, as the best temporary means of earning an honest livelihood. Shortly before this, however, he had made the most important friendship of his life.

He had met Jane Welsh for the first time.

It may safely be said that there does not exist in literature any more fascinating, pathetic, and tragic story than that presented in the interlaced destinies of Jane Welsh, Thomas Carlyle, and Edward Irving. Each possessed a character of extraordinary power and originality. How Carlyle was great, we know ; we know also how Irving failed ; but we can see, too, how under other circumstances he might have taken his place if not with the immortals at least not far below them. Of Jane Welsh, it is perhaps enough to say, as Charlotte Cushman said of her long after, "She was able to live in the full light of Carlyle's genius and celebrity without being overpowered by it ; she was in her own way as great as he, and yet lived only to minister to him." In Mrs. O'Phant's Life of Edward Irving, we may read how as a child Jane Welsh hid herself under the table in her father's sitting-room, and when everything was still burst out with a Latin declension she had learnt in secret, and coaxed her father into allowing her to proceed with her classical studies. Here in Mr. Froude's book we may read another story of her childhood which shows her to have been no ordinary child :

"The classical world in which I lived and moved was best indicated in the tragedy of my doll. It had been intimated to me by one whose wishes were law, that a young lady in Virgil should for consistency's sake drop her doll. So the doll being judged, must be made an end of ; and I, 'doing what I would with my own,' like the Duke of Newcastle, quickly decided how. She should end as Dido ended, that doll ! as the doll of a young lady in Virgil should end ! With her dresses, which were many and sumptuous, her four-posted bed, a faggot or two of cedar allumettes, a few sticks of cinnamon, a few cloves, and a —nutmeg ! I non ignara futuri constructed her funeral pyre—sub auras, of course ; and the new Dido, having placed herself in the bed, with help, spoke through my lips the last sad words of Dido the first, which I had then all by heart as pat as A B C, and have now forgotten all but two lines :

"Vixi et quem dederat cursum fortuna peregi ;  
Et nunc magna mei sub terras ibit imago.

And half a line more—

"Sic, sic juvat ire sub umbras.

"The doll having thus spoken, pallida morte futurâ, kindled the pile and stabbed herself with a penknife by way of Tyrian

sword. Then, however, in the moment of seeing my poor doll blaze up—for, being stuffed with bran she took fire and was all over in no time—in that supreme moment my affection for her blazed up also, and I shrieked and would have saved her but could not, and went on shrieking till everybody within hearing flew to me, and bore me off in a plunge of tears—an epitome of most of one's 'heroic sacrifices,' it strikes me, magnanimously resolved on, ostentatiously gone about, repented of at the last moment, and bewailed with an outcry. Thus was my inner world at that period three-fourths old Roman, and one-fourth old fairy."

To Miss Welsh, Carlyle was introduced by Irving, who had in former days been her tutor. An attachment of a very intimate kind had sprung up between the teacher and pupil, and Miss Welsh did not hesitate to say that she loved Irving "passionately." But Irving was already engaged in another quarter. In Scotland a betrothal is a more solemn ceremony than in England, and a broken engagement is considered to carry with it some disgrace. Irving, when he found that his feelings were deeply engaged with Miss Welsh, sought freedom from his other tie. But he sought it in vain. The Martin family kept him to his bond. It is not difficult to guess the course of Edward Irving and Jane Welsh in such circumstances as these. They were the last people to adopt the methods of George Sand. Obligation with them was everything, and Miss Welsh insisted that Irving should keep his engagement. He made a loyal husband to Miss Martin, and not long afterwards went to London, to follow his meteoric destiny, flaming suddenly into prominence and fashion, and dwindling and dying ultimately in the most pathetic manner. Carlyle meanwhile became Miss Welsh's mentor, and soon, to Irving's openly-expressed dismay, introduced her to the German authors with whom he had himself but lately become acquainted, and who were to him then the most inspiring of thinkers. The acquaintance ripened slowly into friendship. Carlyle was powerfully attracted by the earnestness and strength of Miss Welsh, qualities which were but partially hidden by the veil of wit and sarcasm. At last, attaching too much meaning to some warm expression of friendship, Carlyle supposed that she had promised to be his wife. He speedily discovered his mistake. Candour was one of the most prominent virtues of this re-

markable pair. "My friend," she wrote, "I love you. I repeat it, though I find the expression a rash one. All the best feelings of my nature are concerned in loving you. But were you my brother I should love you the same. No; your friend I will be, your truest, most devoted friend, while I breathe the breath of life. But your wife, never. Never, not though you were as rich as Croesus, as honoured and renowned as you yet shall be."

The last touch shows that Jane Welsh has gauged Carlyle's powers as truly as Margaret Gordon. She determined he should have opportunities to unfold his powers, and she made a will leaving the whole of her property to her mother (who had been left entirely dependent on the daughter), and after her own and her mother's death, to Carlyle.

Carlyle's outward circumstances had meanwhile been undergoing change. The Buller tutorship had brought him intimately into contact with members of a class above that in which he himself was born. It had, too, taken him to London, where he had seen, with little admiration, some of the notable literary men. He had partially recovered his health and his prospects were improving. He had written his *Life of Schiller*, and had translated *Wilhelm Meister*. The correspondence with Miss Welsh still continued. Gradually Miss Welsh had come to look upon marriage with Carlyle as a possibility, and an informal engagement had sprung up between them. His income was at present the most formidable external obstacle. The Welshes had long owned a wild moorland farm called Craigenputtock. Carlyle proposed to Miss Welsh that they should marry and go and live there. The place was a positive wilderness, and Miss Welsh was not equal to the sacrifice. She replied thus to the proposal: "I love you, and I should be the most ungrateful and injudicious of mortals if I did not. But I am not in love with you; that is to say my love for you is not a passion which overclouds my judgment and absorbs all my regards for myself and others. It is a simple, honest, serene affection, made up of admiration and sympathy, and better perhaps to found domestic enjoyment on than any other. In short, it is a love which influences, does not make, the destiny of a life. . . . And now let me ask you, have you any certain livelihood to maintain me in the manner I have been used to live in? Any fixed place in the rank of society I

have been born and bred in? No . . . Think of some more promising plan than farming the most barren spot in the county of Dumfriesshire. What a thing that would be to be sure! You and I keeping house at Craigenputtock! I would as soon think of building myself a nest on the Bass Rock. Nothing but your ignorance of the spot saves you from the imputation of insanity for admitting such a thought. Depend upon it you could not exist there a twelvemonth. For my part I would not spend a month at it with an angel." But this uncompromising refusal was softened towards the end of the letter by the promise that at any rate she would not marry anyone else, and what seemed then so impossible to Miss Welsh did actually come about, for not very long afterwards, when Carlyle and she were married, they did reside at this dreary farm, and there spent seven years of their lives. We have not space to follow in detail the negotiations—we must use this for want of a better word—which culminated in marriage. Mrs. Welsh was opposed to it from the beginning. She had determined to give up her house at Haddington. Carlyle immediately proposed to Miss Welsh that they should occupy it together, never dreaming that it would perhaps not be agreeable to his wife to be surrounded by all the friends of her childhood, who looked upon her marriage, as Mrs. Welsh herself did, as an act of folly. She reminded him that they would be among people who knew her well, and that interruptions would be frequent. "To me," he wrote, "among the weightier evils and blessings of existence, the evil of impertinent visitors and so forth, seems but a small drop of the bucket, and an exceedingly little thing. I have nerve in me to despatch that sort of deer for ever by dozens in the day." "That sort of deer" were, as Mr. Froude explains, the companions who had grown up beside Miss Welsh for twenty years!

The pathos and tragedy of Jane Welsh's life were summed up in two sayings. The first, "There would have been no tongues if Irving had married me;" the second, "I married for ambition. Carlyle has exceeded all that my wildest hopes ever imagined of him, and I am miserable." From this Mr. Froude concludes that it would have been better had she never married Carlyle. We think his conclusion is contradicted by the materials he himself supplies us for judging. That she would have been happier had she married Irving

there can be little doubt; for her powerful influence would probably have withheld him from all the extravagances of his later life, from the "hoo-ings and ha-ings" of the speakers with tongues. But that second saying must surely have been uttered in a moment of natural weakness. If we imagine it to have been her final utterance her character becomes incomprehensible, for all that we read of her shows her to be one who was always ready to sacrifice happiness to duty. That she missed commonplace felicity in marrying Carlyle may be taken for granted; but she gained what to her was probably more valuable, viz., the inward satisfaction of duty accomplished.

So far we have refrained from bringing prominently forward what Mr. Froude aptly calls "the prickly aspects" of Carlyle's character. But there have been plenty of writers to do that for us. The fact cannot be disguised that Carlyle's was not a loveable character. No one can read these volumes or the Reminiscences without being saddened. There is little charity in them, and no toleration. Carlyle was exacting and overbearing. He could see good in hardly anyone save his wife and the members of his own family. He heaps abuse upon his literary contemporaries. He throws himself upon the slightest imperfection in those with whom he came in contact, fastens upon it and magnifies it till the good traits are forgotten. Of all this there are many painful instances to be picked out of these volumes. But while all this is remembered, Carlyle's extraordinary temperament should not be forgotten. He suffered all his life from chronic dyspepsia, a disorder which condemns its victims to the gloomiest views of things. He had, too, a nervous constitution of extraordinary sensitiveness. The least noise disturbed him. He suffered constantly from sleeplessness, and was irritated beyond endurance by the commonest inconveniences. In the diary of his tour in Ireland, the first part of which is published in the current number of the Century Magazine, we have a perfect illustration of his tendency to exaggerate whatever was unpleasant in his surroundings. What to others would have been merely unpleasant became to him base, squalid, and odious. But he who would look only on "the prickly aspect" of Carlyle's character, and judge the whole man from that, would do grievous injustice to one of the greatest men of the century. In the first place it must never be forgotten that a man will

write in a letter to wife, brother, or friend things that he would never say under other circumstances, and that he will say in a company of friends things that he would never say in more formal society.

It is affirmed by many of those who knew Carlyle that the sayings which seem so bitter when read, lost half their sting when they were uttered in his broad Annandale accent, and accompanied by one of the shouts of Carlylean merriment. One has only to read Mr. Moncure Conway's delightful little book on Carlyle to see that this would be so. But it would be ignoring obvious facts to say, as Miss Martineau said of Walter Landor, that Carlyle's contempt and bitterness were qualities of style rather than of soul. Carlyle's gruffness existed; it was part of the man. And we may admit that, and yet not shut him out from a place side by side with some of the greatest. The world has a high place in its esteem for men of Carlyle's temperament. Those who cry out at the ill-temper of Carlyle should turn again to his works and see what he did in the world. In the volumes which represent his life-work lie both the explanation of and the atonement for his personal failings. He first made England acquainted with German literature; he wrote a magnificent epic (the truest history and the truest poetry, John Mill called it); The French Revolution; he unveiled the genius of Cromwell; he brought us face to face with some of the greatest characters of history and literature; he interpreted for us our own times; he sang of work with all the enthusiasm which men have hitherto poured forth only in singing of war; he was one of the most exalted and stimulating of our moralists; and beyond and through all this he was one of the greatest of religious teachers. This may be affirmed with safety, though the time has not yet come when his place and influence can be finally judged.

#### CONVICT ANGELICA SIMPSON: A PRISON MATRON'S STORY.

A STORY IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

ONE dreary afternoon in the year 186—, the heavy gates of — Prison swung slowly round and opened; not however to release one of its inmates, but to admit the prison van.

I, Annie Barton, prison matron in charge of the F Ward, had been duly advised that a new recruit would be added to my list,

and stood ready at my post to receive the prisoner.

I was not in the least curious. Events of the kind were common enough, and the arrival of yet one more wretched creature simply meant to me extra trouble, additional responsibility and worry. The prisoner might prove of a violent and refractory disposition; it might be necessary to struggle with her in her moods of defiance and disorder; she might even place my life in jeopardy—I had already had one or two narrow escapes—in short, the advent of a new convict could only serve to render my load of anxiety and care still greater and more vexing.

The prisoner was led in.

A tall, shapely young woman, dressed in quiet dark clothes which fitted her and became her to perfection. Fair-haired, with deep calm blue eyes full of inner light. Sorrowful as suited her condition, but resigned and dignified in spite of the place, the ignominy of her position, and the prospect of much hardship and spirit-breaking punishment.

A "lady-prisoner" beyond all doubt. This much my experience of convicts led me to appreciate at once. No common thief this, accustomed to prison life, with a profound knowledge of prison rules, ready to take advantage, from the first moment of entrance, of the little laxities which even the most stringent and rigorous system of discipline must always allow. Certainly a person about to expiate a "first offence," and wholly new to her present surroundings.

The beautiful face attracted even callous me. It was such a contrast to the average run of faces about me—not so much on account of its extreme beauty, perhaps, as for the sweetness of its expression. Many pretty women had passed into my hands—I remember one girl with a Madonna-like effigy who turned out to be a very Jezebel in the flesh—but not one who drew me to her mesmerically as this new convict did. Besides, I had a consciousness that the face reminded me vaguely of someone—I could not tell of whom just then. Nor, indeed, had I leisure to question myself, for I had my pressing duties to attend to, and my hands and thoughts were more than full.

My first task was to enter the new comer's name and some details respecting her in my register.

"Angelica Simpson; age, twenty-three; crime, a robbery of jewels from the house

in which she was employed as governess; sentence, two years. 'Not previously known,' added by way of a rider.

Dry unromantic facts these, and scarcely answering to my expectations. When superior-looking women of the Angelica Simpson stamp came to us it was generally for different reasons—child-murder after the Hetty Sorrel manner, the stabbing of men or women in fits of jealous passion, but rarely theft. The robbery of jewels appeared to me a vulgar offence, not at all in harmony with the bearing of the prisoner before me.

Our matron "hairdresser" now came forward, armed with a pair of formidable scissors, which she snapped and clicked viciously. Being wretchedly provided herself with a poor quantity of colourless door-matting, which she called hair, she experienced a keen and spiteful delight in the performance of her tonsorial duties.

"Simpson, you must sit down and have your hair cut, according to rules," I said to the new convict.

These words on my part were generally the stormy petrel of a disturbance. If there is one thing more than another which drives the women mad it is this clipping of their hair. After I uttered my command I usually girded myself for a struggle, ready to hold the prisoner down and compel her to submit to the distasteful operation. Sometimes, too, in the case of a strong and powerful convict it was necessary for me to summon the aid of male guards, and many were the subterfuges and specious arguments I had to deal with and overcome by sternly repeating that the regulations of the prison ordered hair to be cut, and that I was there to see the rules enforced.

A girl who came to serve a second term of punishment in my ward once tried to save herself by means of an ingenious plea.

"If you please, Miss Barton," she said to me, "I've been married since I was last here. My hair belongs to my 'usband —you can't touch it; it's agin' the laws of the country."

She cost me a sprained wrist, so fierce and determined was her resolve not to yield.

But as regards the new prisoner Simpson, any anxiety that I felt was without foundation. She merely smiled an intensely sad smile and answered:

"Very well; I am ready."

In a moment all her lovely silky golden tresses streamed down to her waist, and the matron hairdresser with her cruel

sharp scissors snapped away fiendishly, shearing, as I thought, even more than was absolutely warranted. But in any event I was powerless to interfere. She was supposed to understand her duties, and it was not for me to check her.

"Follow me to the bath-room," I then said when this first ordeal was over. "You must have a bath, according to rules."

The water was clean, though this was not always the case, especially on a rapidly succeeding influx of prisoners; but it was so on this occasion, and I was extremely glad.

Simpson seemed so gentle and resigned to her fate, that in my eyes she deserved at least this one piece of comparative good fortune.

After the bath, endured with meek patience, she put on the prison clothes I had laid out for her—a brown serge dress, blue check apron, and muslin cap of the "mob" tribe. Not even the loss of her hair or the unattractive garb she was henceforth to wear instead of her own lady-like costume could make her look otherwise than good and pleasant to see. In any other place I should have taken her to be the very ideal of the "sister" nurse, so pure and placid did she seem; and the wonder of it was that the clothes—chosen almost haphazard—sat well upon her and were a pronounced "fit."

In another five minutes I had conducted her to the cell ready and vacant for her reception; and Angelica Simpson, dead to the outer world, had become one of the sheep of my own special fold.

The noise of our footsteps breaking the solemn stillness of the corridor, aroused of course the curiosity and attention of my charges at work in their "solitaries." Certain sounds of movement told me that the advent of one more fellow-creature "in trouble" was suspected by them, and that they were restless and eager to obtain a sight of her. One of them, Mary Cooper, a violent passionate woman, convicted of robbery from the person, and who had been more than once an inmate of the gaol, called me to her.

"What do you want, Cooper?" I asked, opening the door of her cell.

"Oh, if you please, miss," she answered, "the point of my needle have broke."

The woman was making canvas bags, so I looked in order to verify her statement. It was a pure fabrication; the needle was as good and strong as ever.

"How dare you trouble me in this way

for nothing?" I said indignantly. "There is nothing the matter with your needle. Go on with your work."

"Oh, I beg your pardon, miss," she answered with a horrid half-suppressed giggle, "it's all my mistake I'm sure. There ain't nothing the matter with it, as you say."

"Silence, and go on with your work, or I shall have to report you."

"I say, miss," she added, defying all rules, "who's the noo one? A prig in course; one of Jenkinson's school I dessay. Won't you tell me?"

I did my best to stop her, but her tongue was so voluble that no power on earth could have arrested its flow.

"Silence! how dare you? I shall report you, Cooper."

"Do as you like. Don't care if you do," answered the woman savagely. "Oh, I shall smash for this, drat me if I don't, and I'll make it hot for the noo one, see if I don't. I'll smash, you may bet."

I closed the door, resolved not to listen to her any farther. In accordance with strict duty I ought to have had her removed at once to the "dark" cell, for she had announced her intention to "smash," and that meant tearing her clothes into shreds, breaking her deal table into fire-sticks, demolishing the window panes, and doing whatever damage it was in her power to do. But I was naturally inclined to be lenient, and besides I thought she might get the better of her temper, and reconsider her determination.

So I left her to herself, and busied myself with my numberless duties of general inspection and superintendence.

The clock struck a quarter to eight, the time appointed for the collection of scissors, needles, and other implements of work. The day's labours were now over, and a little leisure was allowed the prisoners till half-past eight, when the beds would have to be made, the gas turned out, and all sounds hushed in sleep.

Though it was long past the "tea" hour, it was in my power to make an exception in favour of the new comer Simpson, so I brought her the usual quantity of gruel, which constituted that meal, served out in a little tin pint.

I found her crying very quietly, but on my entering she did her best to look calm and composed.

"I have brought you your tea, Simpson," I said, placing the gruel upon the table, and not seeming to notice that she had been crying.

She just glanced at the thick pasty mess and no more.

"Must I—must I eat it?" she then asked in rather an imploring tone. "I am not in the least hungry, and would rather not if—if it is not against the rules."

"No, you are not compelled to eat it, if it is not your wish," I answered, "only take care you don't feel faint in the night."

"Thank you very much, but I haven't the heart to touch anything just now."

"You must say 'miss' when you speak to me here," I said to her as gently as I could. "I am the officer here and am always called 'miss.'"

This was no petty vanity on my part. I was simply instructing the poor thing for her own good. She might have to do with other matrons besides myself, and then her ignorance of prison discipline would more than probably subject her to a sharp and disagreeable reprimand.

She took my hint in excellent part.

"I beg your pardon, miss," she said, "I did not know, but I shall remember for the future."

"Very good, Simpson; you'll soon get accustomed I hope to your new life; have patience, that's all; your time won't seem so very long if you only behave yourself."

The tears bubbled up once more in her beautiful blue eyes, and she with difficulty repressed them.

"I am the most unfortunate woman in the world," she exclaimed, actuated by an uncontrollable burst of feeling, "but thank you all the same, miss. Yours is the first kind face I have seen for many a weary day."

Such demonstrations are dangerous alike to officer and prisoner, so nodding to her, I opened the door and left her once more in solitude.

My "assistant-matron" was unwell, and in consequence, though it was not my turn to be on "night" duty, I had to take her place. After reading the usual evening prayers, and saying one more final word of comfort to Simpson, I put on my goloshes—"sneaks" is the name given to them by the convicts—and began pacing my rounds, passing each cell once every hour, ready to report either a case of sudden sickness, or deal with a breach of discipline.

Weary work this night-watching, when the gloom of a gaol is threefold intensified; weary work for a young woman like myself, who could think of other girls sleeping tranquilly in their beds at home, for

whom the dawn brought the daily routine of "shopping" and other delights denied to me. But there was no help for it, and Annie Barton, tired out with a long day's task, must perforce tread the still corridors with the active vigilance of a policeman on his "beat."

I had forgotten the threat of the woman Cooper, but she took good care to remind me of it. She waited till my soft footsteps died away at the end of the long passage, and then began her "smash." First her dress was torn into shreds, and I was too far away from her to catch any sounds; then she destroyed her bedding, and it was only on hearing the crash of a broken window-pane, that I became aware of her misconduct. I rushed immediately to her cell, and found her now shrieking with laughter, prepared to tackle the table with her strong hands.

"There, miss!" she exclaimed on seeing me, "I've done it now! I told you I would! I've been longing for a bit of a breeze, and I'm a having of it now! Jolly! Hurrah!"

It was useless for me to attempt to struggle with her single-handed. She was the strongest woman in the ward, as muscular as a tigress, and an expert boxer. A strapping fine animal whom nothing could daunt, and whom it took three powerful men to master. Lest my statement seem exaggerated, let anyone question a London policeman as to the resisting strength of even weak women turned out of a public-house and dragged to the "lock-up." Mary Cooper had often been refractory before, and I knew exactly what to do. I gave the alarm and had the guards summoned.

"You'll never get to Brixton at this rate, Cooper," I said sternly. (Brixton is the prison where convicts were drafted on good conduct after their term of probation, and where the system of discipline was less rigorous.) "It's too bad of you to tease me in this way; I'm ashamed of you!"

"All right, miss, don't take on; 'taint your fault; it's all along o' the noo one what came to-day, and I 'ate her for it! Hurrah! here comes the boys! Now for a reg'lar downright scrimmage!"

Out of reverence for my own sex, I would rather not detail too closely a disgusting and revolting scene, though unfortunately I was too familiar with such occurrences to be in any way shocked or discomposed. The woman was what is known as "game," and fought

with indescribable ferocity. Nor can I say either that the men who closed with her were very gentle or considerate in their treatment, though they laughed a good deal, and did their best not to lose their tempers. In the end she sank down overpowered; the handcuffs were put upon her, and she was led away to the "dark" cell to expiate her aggravated offence by a few days' bread-and-water diet, coupled with the torments of constant obscurity.

The noise of the screaming and scuffling had awakened all the sleeping prisoners in their cells, who, accustomed to such disturbances, no doubt turned round surlily in their beds, and showered anything but benedictions upon the head of their refractory fellow-convict, and I suddenly bethought me that Simpson might be alarmed.

On my opening her door I found her standing upright pale with terror.

"Oh, what has happened?" she exclaimed.

"Don't be frightened," I answered; "it's only a prisoner who has chosen to break out into bad behaviour. Everything is quiet again now, and you can go to sleep."

She clasped her hands excitedly, and her intense anguish was piteous to witness.

"Good God!" she murmured, "what have I done to you to be in such a place, and to endure such agony!"

I turned the key of the cell-door and passed on, for in another moment I should certainly have had my arms round her neck and wept with her.

## CHAPTER II.

EVERYTHING went admirably during the next three or four days. My instinct had not proved false, and I found Simpson a model prisoner, gentle, submissive, bearing all her sufferings—and they were heart-breaking, that I could see—with true womanly patience and resignation.

The women of the ward took a good look at her in the morning as they all turned out to scrub the flagstones, and made up their minds at once that she was a "lady-prisoner;" not one of their class; no adept in thieves' patter, with nothing "game" about her; and they therefore turned up their noses in contempt at her.

Simpson's beauty and simple dignity were also much against her, and made them jealous; but the sight of her frail white hands scouring the hard stones proved some emollient satisfaction to them, and so they left her alone, while she, on

the other hand, was only too thankful to remain unnoticed.

Nevertheless, one convict, Adelaide Garnish by name, who had some claims to being a "lady-prisoner," having been convicted of falsely representing herself to be a general's daughter, and obtaining credit from tradesmen on such pretences, and who boasted of a tolerable share of education, did make some advances towards friendliness, which did not escape me, though I forbore to interfere.

Simpson, however, met them civilly, but with such a sad-hearted cordiality that the woman, who was of a bold restless spirit, soon got weary of her well-meaning attentions, and changed her mind as to making a "pal" of the new comer, always speaking contemptuously of her as a "poor weak thing, who had no business to be where she was."

As a "governess," and presumably mistress of no handicraft, Simpson should have been put to coir-picking as her daily task, but it grieved me to think that her dainty little hands should suffer such rough usage, so, ascertaining that she was a quick and practised needlewoman, I obtained permission to set her to work on making men's shirts, and I must say that the contractors who became possessed of her labour had a fine bargain of it. It was the neatest thing of the kind I had seen, and the unfortunate woman loved her work, and was loth to leave it, tiresome as it was, finding in it some small measure of relief.

"I can make dresses, miss," she said to me one day, when I gave her some slight praise. "I used to make all my own."

"Can you?" I answered. "Very well, Simpson; you shall make one for me soon, if you like, and if all the other matrons are pleased with it they will find you work fast enough."

"Oh, thank you, miss. I don't complain of the shirts, but they are just a little trying to the fingers at times."

These first few days were sufficiently calm and peaceable, but there was to be a change when the turbulent Mary Cooper returned from her "dark" cell, a trifle thinner and paler, but unbroken in spirit, and as fierce as ever.

In her distorted irrational mind, the "noo" prisoner was the sole cause of her recent outbreak and punishment, and brooding over this fancy in her solitude and darkness, she had sworn vengeance. The new convict should smart for it; she

should pay for it; existence in prison should be made "hot" for her.

Nor did Simpson's grave sorrowful face and quiet inoffensive manner disarm or soften the woman. The majority of female convicts in our prisons are hard riddles to solve. Doctors put down their unaccountable freaks and variable moods to hysteria, and I am disposed to think they are right. These women laugh, dance, weep, and mope alternately, without ostensible motive. Their periodical "smashings" can only be attributed to an extreme hunger for change from the dreary monotony of the day's routine, and even Solomon himself personified in a matron could not obviate such disturbances. Men convicts, I am told, though dogged and sullen, seldom break out, save on dire provocation, but it is allowed that the women are extremely troublesome and inconsistent, defying severity, and rendered even worse in many cases by gentleness and kindness.

Cooper commenced her tactics of aggravation the first thing in the morning, when she and the rest were at work scrubbing the corridor of the ward. Her cell was next but one to that of Simpson, so that she was able to make a stealthy snatch at Simpson's pail, a brand-new one, and kept bright and clean till it shone like polish, substituting for it her own, which was battered and out of shape, owing to her "smashing" proclivities.

I was not aware at the time of the deed, but it seems that Simpson made no complaint or attempt at remonstrance, going on quietly with her work.

Cooper was for the rest of the day in a gleeful state. Ignorant as I was of the circumstance, her mirth proved a mystery to me, but I was only too glad to see this trying creature apparently contented and good-humoured.

This, however, was unfortunately not all, and without my knowledge, poor Simpson endured silently the tortures which it is possible for a malignant devilish woman to inflict upon another, even in a prison, where "association" is avoided as much as it can be.

The "airing" yard afforded the best opportunities for the carrying out of her fiendish promptings. There, whilst the women marched in Indian file round and round during their hour's enforced exercise, Cooper would make cat-like springs, and tread upon Simpson's dress, or pull her hair, or pinch her, or crush her feet with her own heavy clumsy shoes. Nothing

which spite could suggest to a cruel cunning animal, as she was, obeying unreasoning instinct, was forgotten, and yet I, at my post, watching them all as they passed me, saw nothing, and was not allowed to see.

Only once, before I obtained cognizance of the whole matter, did Simpson give any sign which might have aroused my suspicions. Cooper, as I afterwards learned, seized her by the neck, and pinched so hard as to wring from her a sharp cry of pain, which startled the silence of the yard, and brought me hurrying to the spot.

"Simpson, was that you?" I asked.  
"What is the matter?"

The poor woman looked gently in the direction of Cooper, and answered feebly:

"Nothing, miss; it was only a spasm, I shall be better presently."

I might have guessed the true state of things from the look of surprise which came over Cooper's face, but I had cares of my own, and my thoughts were far away from my mechanical duties so that I took Simpson's statement for granted.

"Would you like to see the doctor by-and-by?" I however asked. "I think you had better, if you are at all subject to such things. He will soon set you right."

"Thank you, miss. I don't think I shall require him; it was a mere nothing."

It might be thought that such generous forbearance would have caused a revulsion of feeling in Cooper, and softened her spite. Not a bit of it, the woman was impervious to all gentle influences; but as she was also to a certain extent different to any other being I have come across, she must needs manage things in her own queer way, and betray herself by her own free and deliberate act.

She went on for some time persecuting her victim, but at last wearied out, no doubt, by this silent and patient endurance, she turned upon her one day during the airing, in my presence.

"Why don't you cry out, swear at me, spit on me, or say something?" she shrieked, stepping out of the ranks, and eyeing Simpson defiantly. "Now look yere, miss," she added, addressing me, "yere have I been a teasing, an' pinching, an' a worritin' this crittur these three weeks, and she don't take no more notice of me nor as if I was dead an' buried. Why don't she fight me? Why don't she speak? Yah!"

"What is the meaning of all this, Cooper?" I said. "Step back into your place at once."

"Sha'n't till I've had my say! Haven't

I done all I could to get the devil out of her, and don't she take it all with the sperrit of a lamb? Ain't it enough to aggravate a saint?"

With arms akimbo she stood erect, glorying in her brutishness and insubordination.

I was terribly angry. Cooper could have simply broken me in two, such was the strength of this elephantine woman; but I felt ready to spring upon her and give her a good shaking. Simpson's pale face told me all she must have suffered, and I was dreadfully annoyed with myself for having been so careless and blind.

"Not another word!" I shouted. "Back to the ranks, and you know what to expect, Cooper. I shall make a special report of this to the governor. You shall get all the punishment you deserve."

There must be something in a moral show of power, for the woman, cowed by my harsh tones and imperious gestures, slunk into her place.

Simpson, however, did not remain silent.

"Don't punish her, miss, please don't to oblige me," she said gently, raising a little her right hand. "I forgive her readily; I don't think she means me any harm, and I have done her no injury. Our life is a very hard one, but we should try to be patient with one another—we are all sisters here."

Rough, uncouth, ignorant, and bad as they all were, standing still, and at first delighted in the scene which was an agreeable diversion for them, the simple earnestness and gentleness of their fellow prisoner in the face of the provocations they knew her to have received, moved them. The word "sister," too, seemed to have an especial pathetic ring in it, and many a sleeve brushed away with some feeling of shame the tear which forced itself into their eyes.

Some began to heap reproaches upon Cooper, who amazed, abashed, and completely thrown out of herself, stood staring wildly, heedless of everything.

"Lord bless her!" she exclaimed at last, recovering herself. "Lord bless her 'and-some kind face! She's a real one she is! Yere, miss, take me to the dark, I shall smash if you don't! It's a coming, I feel it's a coming!"

I felt it wise to comply with her request, and ordering all my prisoners indoors, as it was my duty to do after this wild breach of discipline, Cooper suffered herself to be led away as mild as milk.

Simpson became the talk of our matron's mess-room. The chief matron heard of

her ; the lady superintendent, and even the general, our governor, were supplied with a version of the affair, and some interest was engendered in the fate of the poor woman. The prison chaplain, a grave earnest divine, whose task was a burdensome one, was for once at a loss to account for the presence of such a woman in such a place. Innocent she could not be, or she would not have come under his hands ; but surely a being who, though unable perhaps to resist some passing and strong temptation, was one whom sin had but lightly sullied. Simpson herself had never alluded by complaint or word of any kind to the reason which had brought about her social degradation and ruin, nor, indeed, did she speak of her past life. The subject was a painful one to her, she said ; all was over now, and she preferred silent endurance.

I had a good many desultory conversations with her. In the evening, after the day's toil was over, and when reading was permitted to the prisoners, I brought her books out of the library, and I generally found time for a brief chat. She was a wonderfully well-informed woman, and her small measure of mental recreation afforded her great comfort. We spoke upon a good many subjects, and I fear I often forgot myself as matron during these fugitive moments of intercourse, such was the subtle influence which this woman exercised over me. But not a word even to me relating to her former existence. Burning with feminine curiosity I frequently felt tempted to question her, but I could see that the least attempt in this direction was the cause of much pain to her, and I disciplined myself into respecting her reserve.

It was not long before I became bound to her by a more stringent tie—that of hearty deep-felt gratitude. Certain private cares were a source of tormenting anxiety to me. I could not sleep at night for thinking of them, and my days spent in hard and dreary work made me feel exceedingly unwell and dispirited in mind and body. My prisoners, too, just at this time took it into their heads to be more than commonly troublesome and refractory. I was worried, ill at ease, not at all my own old calm, cheerful, equable self.

One afternoon after a succession of bad, restless, unrefreshing nights, I was in the yard watching the inmates of my ward as

they passed round and round taking their exercise. Too tired to stand I had brought out a seat, and sat dreamily observing the steady monotonous tramp of many feet circling, backwards and forwards. I was wretchedly sleepy ; my eyes would not keep open, try how I might ; and I fell a nodding, unconscious of everything about me, with my thoughts far away in dreamland.

The matron asleep, the prisoners at play ! In a moment my dreams became confused with loud sounds of discordant laughter, snatches of songs, and the muffled patter of feet different to the rhythm of convicts tramping their march. But I did not awake till someone twitched gently at my sleeve, and on opening my eyes with a start I saw it was Simpson ; and I also perceived a scene of frantic disorder which made my flesh creep.

I had just sufficient time to gather my wits together, to command silence, to get by persuasion and threats the prisoners back into their places and recommence the solemn military procession, before the chief matron made her appearance accidentally, having some instructions for me.

Simpson had saved me. Without her timely intervention I should have been certainly subjected to a severe reprimand, a suspension from duty—possibly even discharged. The sentinel asleep at his post must expect no mercy, and what would have become of poor me, and all the long-cherished plans of a brighter future which formed the principal theme of my dreams ? I trembled at the thought, but Simpson from that hour was no longer to me a prisoner soiled by crime, disgraced and shunned ; she was my friend, my dear sister.

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